

THE MARGARET FELL FUND

Friends General Conference Traveling Ministries Program

Gospel ministry is service whose goal is to encourage, support, push,
or invite people to seek and respond to the guidance, teaching, and activity
of the Light and Life at work in all, right now.

Brian Drayton (*On Living With a Concern for the Gospel Ministry*)

OBJECTIVE OF THE MARGARET FELL FUND:

To provide grants to monthly meetings in need of financial support for releasing their members to travel in the gospel ministry.

BACKGROUND:

In the history of Friends we find countless stories of how those who traveled in the gospel ministry were provided the prayerful and practical support they needed to leave their homes and families, farms and businesses, for periods of weeks, months, and years—as they were led. Margaret Fell was well known for making direct appeals to obtain assistance for such Friends during the early years of the Religious Society of Friends. Using her own financial resources, and channeling those of other Friends, she established the Kendal Fund by 1654 to meet the needs of those who traveled in the British Isles, and beyond. Assisting Friends who travel is a well-established practice among Quakers—in both private, discrete ways between individuals and within the monthly and yearly meetings that formally release Friends to faithfully follow their leadings.

It is the experience of the Traveling Ministries Program (TMP) of Friends General Conference that some Friends today are clearly led to travel in the gospel ministry for extended periods of time, as earlier Friends once did. This includes traveling to Friends' meetings and homes for periods of time, from weeks to months, worshiping with Friends and seeking opportunities for spiritual refreshment. There are many ways that the TMP currently provides assistance to these Friends—prayer, encouragement, discernment, coordinating travel, identifying companions in the ministry, and offering travel funds where needed. However, the TMP's current funding provides only limited travel assistance, usually for weekends and only occasionally for longer periods.

Yet our experience confirms that God continues to raise up gospel ministers for more extended travel, where Friends need practical assistance beyond what is needed merely for travel expenses, so they can be released from on-going financial responsibilities during their time of service. Friends find that their monthly and yearly meetings may be able to provide prayerful support, yet practical and financial support is often not adequate to their needs. Seeing this need, and seeking to be faithful to the mission of the Traveling Ministries Program*, Friends General Conference has established the Margaret Fell Fund for the purpose of assisting monthly meetings to release Friends to travel in the gospel ministry as they are led. The details of how the program is administered are outlined below.

*Mission statement: The Traveling Ministries Program provides direct services to yearly and monthly meetings, and worship groups, by supporting seasoned Friends who are Yearly Meeting Visitors, Traveling Resource People, and those with a clear leading from the Divine to travel among Quakers in the gospel ministry.

PREPARATION FOR APPLYING TO THE MARGARET FELL FUND:

- A Friend for whom a grant is being sought should be a member in good standing of the Religious of the Society of Friends and active in the meeting seeking financial assistance on his/her behalf.
- A Friend will have gone through and have been found clear to travel by the monthly meeting; an anchor/support/care committee (hereafter referred to as *the anchor committee****) will have been established by the monthly meeting; a minute of travel will have been approved and forwarded to the quarterly (where they exist) and the yearly meeting and have been endorsed by those bodies of Friends.
- A Friend, in consultation and discernment with the anchor committee of the monthly meeting, will have prepared a budget of his/her detailing the specific needs for financial assistance for the period of the time of travel.
- The monthly meeting will provide the TMC with a plan stating the particulars of its support (financial, practical, and spiritual) for the Friend with a leading to travel, as well as any other ways in which that Friend will be or has been supported (within the yearly meeting; other scholarships, funds, and grants, etc.) and specifics as to how the TMP might assist that Friend (financially and spiritually).

**** Anchor/Care/Support Committee.** The name of this committee may vary depending on the practices of a Friends' monthly meeting/church, but the function of the committee remains the same. It is expected that the appointed committee will not only provide oversight of the ministry and loving care and accountability for the Friend called to travel in the gospel ministry, but will also endeavor to bring the corporate body of the meeting/church under the weight of that ministry, helping to ensure the mutual faithfulness, mutual accountability, and spiritual and practical support of the ministry/minister.

The FGC Traveling Ministries Program has elsewhere referred to such a committee as an "anchor committee," because it anchors the ministry in the body (the monthly meeting/church) that has named and helps to sustain the ministry. A detailed paper on how to form an anchor committee is available on The Traveling Ministries Program web page at www.fgcquaker.org. We will call this the anchor committee in documentation for the Margaret Fell Fund.

HOW TO APPLY FOR A GRANT:

- Upon approval by the monthly meeting of the financial request on behalf of the Friend, the clerk of the Friend's anchor committee will contact the coordinator of the Traveling Ministries Program letting her know of that Friend's proposed travel and the need for assistance. This should be done several months prior to the intended time of travel.
- The TMP coordinator, the Friend with the leading to travel, and a member of his/her anchor committee will enter into joint discernment about the leading to travel under the additional care of TMP and how the TMP may be of assistance.
- After consultation with the TMP coordinator, the clerk of the anchor committee will send a written request and an application (provided by the TMP) making the formal request for a grant, which will include the amount requested of the TMP.
- The TMP coordinator will bring the completed application to the TMP for consideration.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE GRANT:

After the application has been approved by the Traveling Ministries Committee, grants will be distributed by the FGC office with authorization from the TMP coordinator and the TMC clerk.

CARE AND FOLLOW-UP WITH FRIENDS WHO ARE TRAVELING:

- The TMP coordinator and/or TMP liaison will maintain regular contact with the Friend traveling in the ministry as well as the clerk of the anchor committee for that Friend.
- On completion of the period of travel, the Friend who traveled will provide a written report of the travel for her anchor committee and for the TMP. Subsequently, a report of the travel will be submitted to the TMP coordinator by the anchor committee.
- Within a mutually agreed upon period of time and after receiving the report, the TMP coordinator and/or assigned TMP liaison will listen to and consult with the clerk of the anchor committee and the Friend traveling in the ministry for the purpose of review and assessment of the travel experience.